

WO-312  
Purnell-Shockley House  
Snow Hill  
Private

c. 1905

The Purnell-Shockley house is a large early twentieth century ell-shaped frame dwelling that marks the southwest corner of North Church and West Market streets in the center of Snow Hill. This prominent dwelling, supported by a rusticated concrete block foundation and finished with subtle neo-classical details, was built evidently around 1905, after Levi A. Purnell's death in August of 1903. The Sanborn Insurance Company map of Snow Hill printed in 1895 indicates a smaller dwelling on the site. The extant house occupies a prominent corner in the heart of Snow Hill, and although the dwelling is not one of the oldest in town, it contributes to the overall historic character of the Market and Church streets.

This corner lot has been improved by a private residence since the mid nineteenth century, however during the eighteenth century the property was known as the Market Square as designated on Joshua Mitchell's 1793 survey of the town. However, by the turn of the eighteenth century the area across from the courthouse along Market, Washington, Spence's Alley (now Green Street) and Cutler's Alley (now Pearl Street) had developed into the principal business section of Snow Hill. It is not certain what improvements, if any, were located on the old Market Square during the ownership of Robert Dennis and his grandson, John G. W. Waters which lasted until 1825. In fact the property seems to have been unimproved throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. The record of an improvements on the site is found in an 1865 deed between Samuel H. Jarman and Littleton R. Purnell, and L. R. Purnell is designated at this site on the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas of 1877.

The property was sold to Levi A. Purnell in April 1880 for \$2,200, . a sum that reflects a substantial house. Levi A. Purnell died in August 1903, and it is estimated that the extant dwelling was erected during the ownership of Levi Purnell's heir, Mary E. Purnell and her husband Thomas M. Purnell. Purnell family ownership of the house did not end until the early 1940s. In December 1941 Walter J. Shockley and his wife Addie acquired the house and corner lot. After Walter's death, Addie maintained title to the house until 1978 when the current owners bought the property.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: PURNELL-SHOCKLEY HOUSE

MHT Inventory Number: WO-312

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

- 1) Historic Period Theme(s):  
ARCHITECTURE  
COMMERCE
- 2) Geographic Orientation: EASTERN SHORE
- 3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):  
RURAL AGRARIAN INTENSIFICATION  
1680-1815
- 4) Resource Type(s):  
INDUSTRIAL/URBAN DOMINANCE  
1870-1930  
SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING  
OLD MARKET SQUARE LOCATION

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. WO-312

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic PURNELL-SHOCKLEY HOUSE

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 112 North Church Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Snow Hill ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Worcester

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mr. and Mrs. William M. Pool

street & number 112 North Church Street telephone no.:

city, town Snow Hill state and zip code MD 21863

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Clerk of Court liber 624

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio 26

city, town state

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. WO-312

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Purnell-Shockley house is located at 112 North Church Street at the intersection of Church and Federal streets in the center of Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland. The two-and-a-half story, three-bay frame house faces northeast with the principal gable roof oriented on a northwest/southeast axis.

Built around 1905, this two-and-a-half story, three-bay frame dwelling is supported on a raised rusticated concrete block foundation, and the house is uniformly sheathed with narrow weatherboard siding. The steeply pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Attached to the back of the main block is a two-and-a-half story service wing.

The northeast (main) elevation is an asymmetrical elevation with a center double-door entrance framed by single-pane sidelights. A tripartite window flanks the entrance on the south and a window with leaded glass panes defines the north bay. Sheltering the first floor is a square columned porch supported on rusticated concrete piers. The second floor is highlighted by a slightly projected center bay filled with a tripartite window of single-pane sash. Piercing the gable end pediment above is a small Venetian-type window. Large size single-pane sash windows flank the projecting bay.

The north gable end is a symmetrical elevation with pairs of single-pane sash windows lighting each floor. The gable end above the second floor is framed into a pediment with a paired, round arched attic windows surrounded by a field of fish-scale shingles. The windows on each floor flank an interior end brick stack that is finished with a corbelled and dentiled cap. Piercing the roof of the south central end is another brick stack.

The two-and-a-half story, two-bay service wing is distinguished by a single-story bay window as well as an oriole window on the north side. In addition a screened porch fits under the oriole window to shelter the side entrance. Fixed above the oriole window is a gable front roof pierced by a lunette window with radiating muntins. Rising through the center of the service wing is a third brick stack.

The south side of the house is detailed in a plainer fashion with basically the same finishes. Attached to the southwest end of the service wing is an enclosed two-story section covered by a low pitched roof.

The interior was not seen.

A contemporary single-story garage stands behind the house.

## 8. Significance

Survey No.

WO-312

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates****Builder/Architect**check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/orApplicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ GLevel of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Purnell-Shockley house is a large early twentieth century ell-shaped frame dwelling that marks the southwest corner of North Church and West Market streets in the center of Snow Hill. This prominent dwelling, supported by a rusticated concrete block foundation and finished with subtle neo-classical details, was built evidently around 1905, after Levi A. Purnell's death in August of 1903. The Sanborn Insurance Company map of Snow Hill printed in 1895 indicates a smaller dwelling on the site. The extant house occupies a prominent corner in the heart of Snow Hill, and although the dwelling is not one of the oldest in town, it contributes to the overall historic character of the Market and Church streets.

This corner lot has been improved by a private residence since the mid nineteenth century, however during the eighteenth century the property was known as the Market Square as designated on Joshua Mitchell's 1793 survey of the town. However, by the turn of the eighteenth century the area across from the courthouse along Market, Washington, Spence's Alley (now Green Street) and Cutler's Alley (now Pearl Street) had developed into the principal business section of Snow Hill. It is not certain what improvements, if any, were located on the old Market Square during the ownership of Robert Dennis and his grandson, John G. W. Waters which lasted until 1825. In fact the property seems to have been unimproved throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. The record of an improvements on the site is found in an 1865 deed between Samuel H. Jarman and Littleton R. Purnell, and L. R. Purnell is designated at this site on the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas of 1877. The property was sold to Levi A. Purnell in April 1880 for \$2,200, a sum that reflects a substantial house. (ITM 7/515) Levi A. Purnell died in August 1903, and it is estimated that the extant dwelling was erected during the ownership of Levi Purnell's heir, Mary E. Purnell and her husband Thomas M. Purnell. Purnell family ownership of the house did not end until the early 1940s. (JEB 10/315) In December 1941 Walter J. Shockley and his wife Addie acquired the house and corner lot. After Walter's death, Addie maintained title to the house until 1978 when the current owners bought the property. (624/26)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WO-312

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

  
Zone Easting Northing

B 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

  
Zone Easting Northing

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Private Consultant/Worcester Co. date 2/28/90

street & number P. O. Box 5 telephone 301-651-1094

city or town Westover state MD 21871

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

WO-312

~~William Purnell Shockley~~  
112 North Church Street  
Snow Hill, Maryland  
Chain of title

*Purnell - Shockley House*

624/26

Addie J. Shockley

to

5/19/1978

William M. Pool and Helen S. his wife

FWH 199/223

E. Ross Hockersmith and George E. Baker, Jr.  
attorneys and agents

to

10/19/1965

Addie J. Shockley

JEB 10/315

Edmond H. Johnson, trustee

to

12/4/1941

Walter J. Shockley  
Addie J. Shockley

Whereas Mary E. Purnell willed to husband  
Thomas M. Purnell, Mary E. Purnell, brother  
Matthew Purnell--heirs at law of Levi A.  
Purnell

ODC 15/481

half interest lot with improvement

*MATTHEW PURNELL & WIFE MAE*

*MARY E. PURNELL*

*half interest*

ITM 7/515

Littleton R. Purnell

to

4/13/1880

Levi A. Purnell

\$2,200 all that lot or parcel of land or  
all those lots or parcels of land with  
buildings and improvments

WO-312

Page 2

LEVI A. PURNELL HOUSE  
112 North Church Street  
Chain of title

GHR 1/698

Samuel H. Jarman and wife Sally M.

to

9/28/1865

Littleton R. Purnell

\$2,800 Lots of land with buildings

...beginning for the first bounder at the end of the first course of a lot of ground conveyed by James S. Martin and Rebecca his wife to Thomas R. Rounds by deed 9/29/1837 thence running with second line of lot sold to Rounds until it intersects with line of lot 35...thence....intersects the south side of Market Street...intersects west side of Church Street and with Church Street to first beginning

GMH 1/26

Thomas R. Rounds

to

9/29/1837

John S. Martin

\$137.50 "...all that lot or parcel of ground ...in Snow Hill...beginning for the first bounder on the west side of Church Street at the end of the third line, course, or call of lot of ground conveyed by John & Rebecca to Milly Hudson & Betty P. Layfield (2/3/1835) and running by and with said street towards Market Street 110 feet...runing (sic) a straight line parallel with said third line of Milly and Betsy's lot until intersects the line of Lot 35 now owned by said John...back to line of lot conveyed to Daniel Maddox...

AQ 231

John G. W. Waters of Baltimore County

to

1/1/1825

Daniel Maddox of Worcester

WO-312

Page 3

LEVI A. PURNELL HOUSE  
112 North Church Street  
Chain of title

all that lot bounded on north by Market  
...and on the east by Church Street on the  
South by Federal Street and on the west  
by Lotts 35 and 60 ...in possession of  
Robert Dennis for the past twenty-five  
years and upwards...

Will(?)

Robert Dennis

to

grandson, John G. W. Waters

M/77

Robert Martin of Worcester County

to

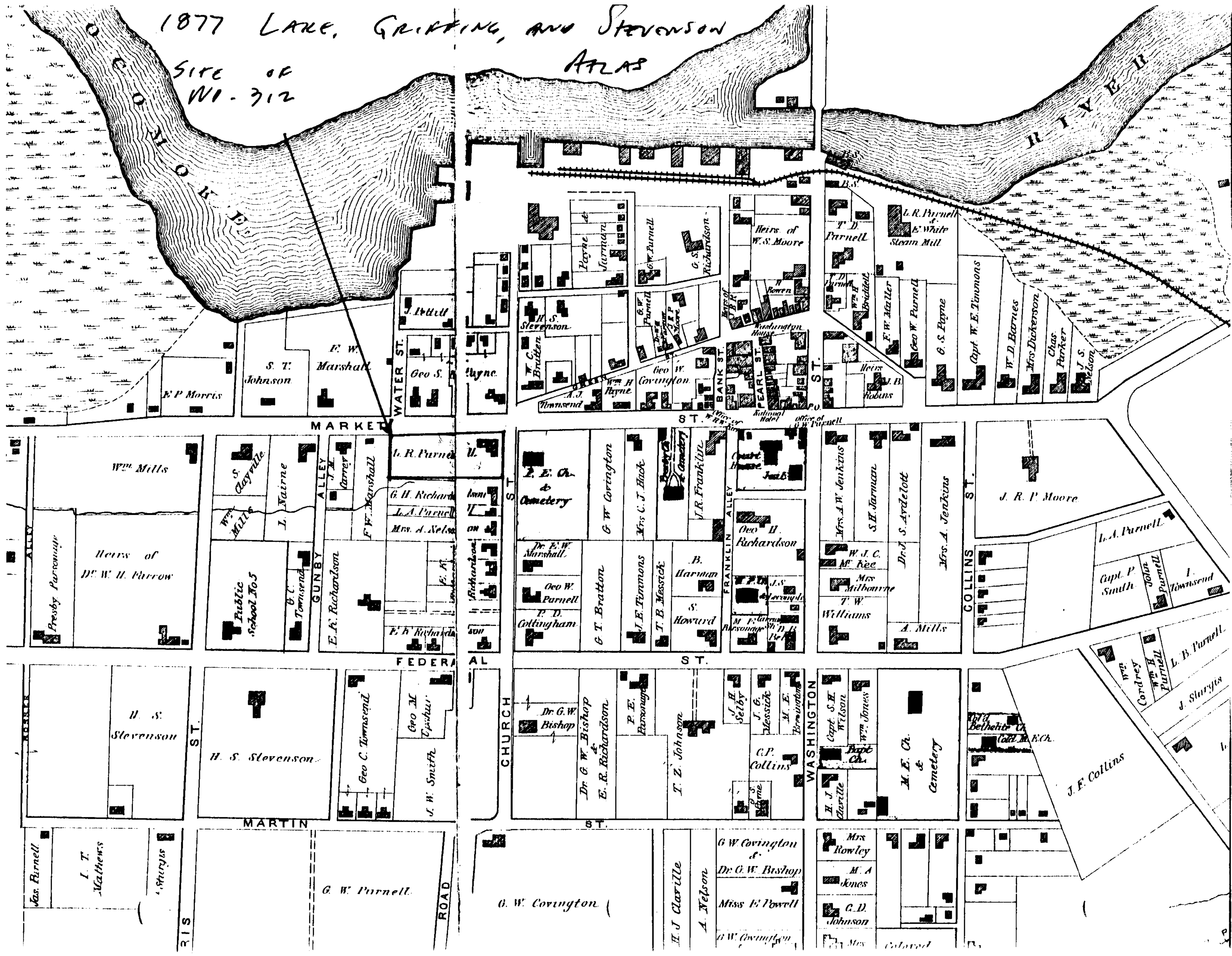
6/7/1786

Robert Dennis

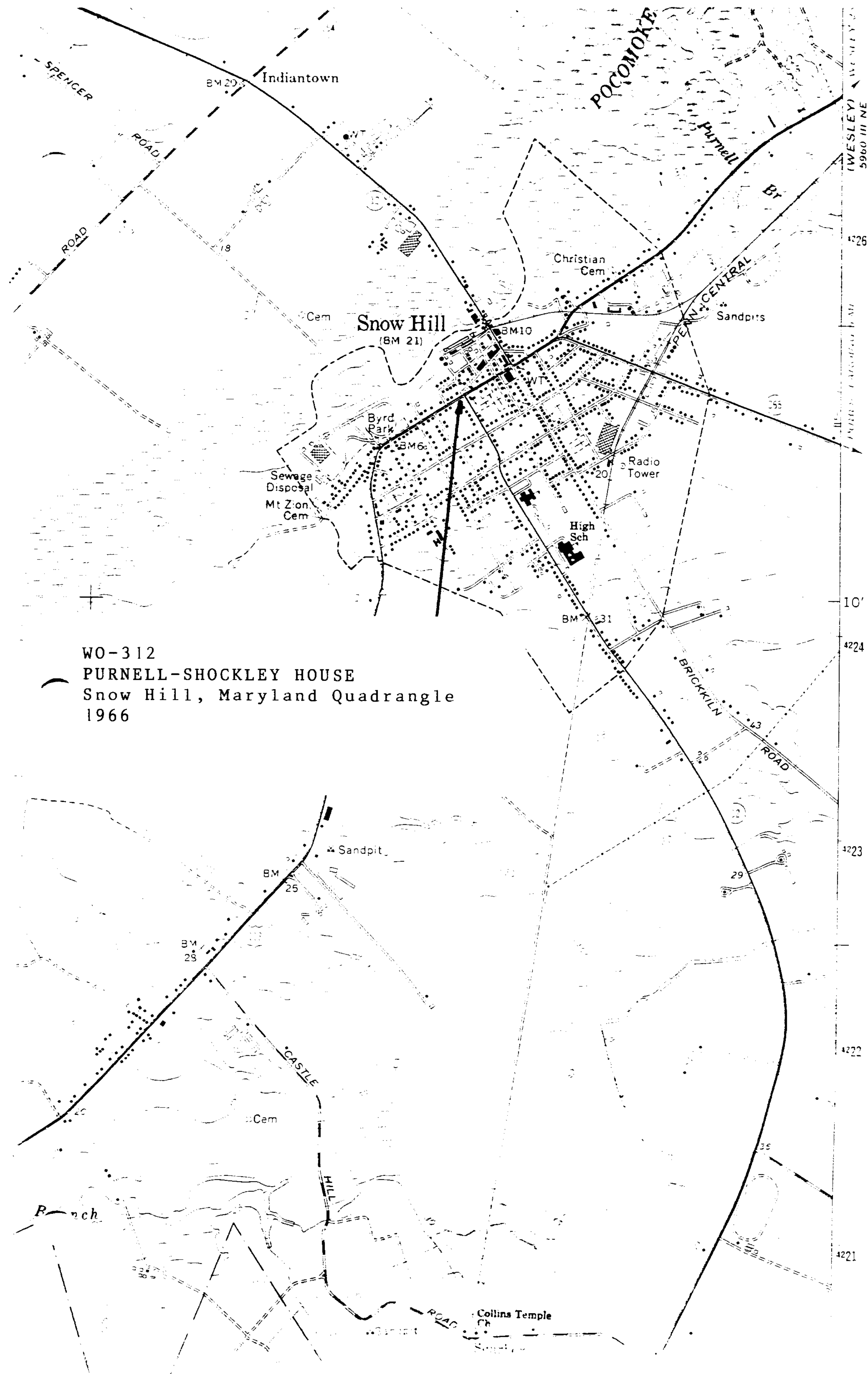
£104.2.0 right, title, and interest in and  
land commonly known by the name New Church  
and Market Ground, also all that piece of  
Cypress swamp lying over the river against  
Snow Hill adjoining the land whereon Captain  
William Handy now lives called 'Fortune'  
containing 50 acres

1877 LAKE, GRIPPING, AND STEVENSON  
ATLAS

SIDE OF  
W1-312







WO-312  
PURNELL-SHOCKLEY HOUSE  
Snow Hill, Maryland Quadrangle  
1966